MILITARY PAY & RETIREMENT/Reserves & the Federal Thrift Savings Plan

SUBJECT: Soldiers', Sailors', Airmen's, and Marines' Bill of Rights Act of 1999 . . . S. 4. Cleland amendment No. 6.

ACTION: AMENDMENT AGREED TO, 100-0

SYNOPSIS: As reported, S. 4, the Soldiers', Sailors', Airmen's, and Marines' Bill of Rights Act of 1999: will authorize a 4.8 percent military pay raise, effective January 1, 2000; will reform the military pay tables; will revise the military retirement system; will authorize active duty military personnel to participate in the Thrift Savings Plan; will revise benefits under the Montgomery G.I. Bill; will authorize a special subsistence allowance for enlisted military personnel who demonstrate eligibility for food stamps; and will require an annual report on the impact of these changes on recruitment and retention.

The Cleland amendment would permit National Guardsmen and Reservists to participate in the Federal Thrift Savings Plan.

Those favoring the amendment contended:

Guardsmen and reservists serve a minimum of 1 weekend per month and 2 weeks per year. In the past, that minimum service has been the norm. However, times are changing. With the large reductions in active duty personnel that have been made in recent years, as well as with the greatly increased operating tempo for the remaining forces, the military has had to rely increasingly on guard and reserve forces. Due to this change, we believe that guardsmen and reserves should be permitted to participate in the Federal Thrift Savings Plan. Many of them, of course, have savings plans for their private sector earnings, and in the past, due to the small percentage of their incomes that have come from the Guard and the Reserves, it has not really been a large burden for them not to be able to participate in the Federal Thrift Savings Plan. Now, though, because of longer periods of active duty, it can be a significant burden. The Cleland amendment would correct this problem by allowing them to participate in the plan, should they so choose. We urge our colleagues to support this amendment.

No arguments were expressed in opposition to the amendment.

YEAS (100)			NAYS (0)		NOT VOTING (0)	
Republican	Democrats (45 or 100%)		Republicans (0 or 0%)	Democrats (0 or 0%)	Republicans	Democrats
(55 or 100%)					(0)	(0)
Abraham Allard Ashcroft Bennett Bond Brownback Bunning Burns Campbell Chafee Cochran Collins Coverdell Craig Crapo DeWine Domenici Enzi Fitzgerald Frist Gorton Gramm Grams Grassley Gregg Hagel Hatch Helms	Hutchinson Hutchison Inhofe Jeffords Kyl Lott Lugar Mack McCain McConnell Murkowski Nickles Roberts Roth Santorum Sessions Shelby Smith, Bob Smith, Gordon Snowe Specter Stevens Thomas Thompson Thurmond Voinovich Warner	Akaka Baucus Bayh Biden Bingaman Boxer Breaux Bryan Byrd Cleland Conrad Daschle Dodd Dorgan Durbin Edwards Feingold Feinstein Graham Harkin Hollings Inouye Johnson	Kennedy Kerrey Kerry Kohl Landrieu Lautenberg Leahy Levin Lieberman Lincoln Mikulski Moynihan Murray Reed Reid Robb Rockefeller Sarbanes Schumer Torricelli Wellstone Wyden		EXPLANAT 1—Official B 2—Necessari 3—Illness 4—Other SYMBOLS: AY—Annour AN—Annour PY—Paired M PN—Paired M	ly Absent nced Yea nced Nay Yea